

## Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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R 181400Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0800

AMEMBASSY MADRID

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT

DIA

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4525

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS PO

SUBJ: FORMATION OF PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT IN EXILE

REF: MADRID 6528

1. OCTOBER 16-17 LISBON PRESS GAVE EXTENSIVE PLAY TO NEWS STORIES CONCERNING PUBLICATION BY MADRID NEWSPAPER NUEVO DIARIO OF ARTICLE CONCERNING FORMATION IN SPAIN OF A "PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT OF THE SILENT MAJORITY IN EXILE". OCTOBER 16 AFTERNOON PAPERS CARRIED OFFICIAL GOS STATEMENTS REGARDING SPAIN'S POLICY OF NOT INTERFERING IN ITS NEIGHBOR'S AFFAIRS OR ALLOWING SPANISH TERRITORY TO BE USED FOR SUCH PURPOSES. MORNING OCT 17 PRESS, IN ADDITION TO PUBLISHING GOS STATEMENT, ALSO CARRIED SERIES OF DENIALS OF STORY'S ACCURACY BY VARIOUS OF PERSONALITIES SUPPOSEDLY INVOLVED WITH EXILE GOVERNMENT. NUEVO DIARIO'S PUBLIC APOLOGY AND DENIAL OF STORY'S ACCURACY ALSO  
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CARRIED IN MORNING PRESS, WHICH NOTED MADRID NEWSPAPER'S

CONCLUSION THAT STORY HAD BEEN PLANTED BY PERSONS INTERESTED IN PREJUDGING SPANISH-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS.

2. COMMENT: FROM POINT OF VIEW OF INTERESTS OF PORTUGUESE CONSERVATIVES (OR, FOR THAT MATTER, OF SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF POPULATION WHICH DOES NOT CONSIDER ITSELF CONSERVATIVE YET NEVERTHELESS IS NERVOUS ABOUT SEEMING LEFTIST TILT OF GOP), FORMATION OF SUCH AN "EXILE GOVERNMENT" WOULD BE SHEER DISASTER. THE RIGHT IS ALREADY LADEN WITH THE HERITAGE OF NEARLY A HALF-CENTURY OF DISCREDITED DICTATORSHIP, AND ITS POST-APRIL 25 ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORTS HAVE NOT GONE VERY FAR IN OVERCOMING THIS BURDEN. THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 28, CENTERING AROUND THE ATTEMPTED RALLY OF THE "SILENT MAJORITY", CONSTITUTE A FURTHER SETBACK TO RIGHTIST FORTUNES.

3. GIVEN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND GIVEN THE PROBABILITY OF A NATIONALISTIC PORTUGUESE BACKLASH TO ANY ATTEMPT TO USE SPANISH SUPPORT OR A SPANISH BASE TO AFFECT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS HERE, AN "EXILE GOVERNMENT" IN MADRID MAKES SENSE ONLY IN TERMS OF A LEFTIST PLOT TO FURTHER DISCREDIT THEIR RIGHTIST OPPOSITION BEFORE THAT OPPOSITION CAN SUCCESSFULLY ORGANIZE ITSELF.

4. WHAT MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN, HOWEVER, IS THAT CURRENT PORTUGUESE POLITICS ARE NOT ALWAYS GOVERNED BY RULES OF LOGIC. A RIGHT-WING STRATEGY INVOLVING OPERATIONS FROM A BASE IN SPAIN, WHILE UNREASONABLE TO THE POINT OF ABSURDITY, IS NOT NECESSARILY ONE TO BE DISMISSED OUT-OF-HAND AS AN INCREDIBLE ONE. IN A CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBOFF ON AFTERNOON OF OCT 16 (I.E. JUST PRIOR TO NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION OF STORY ON EXILE GOVERNMENT), A WELL-CONNECTED RIGHTIST LAWYER SPOKE OF SUCH AN EXILE GROUP HAVING BEEN FORMED. ACCORDING TO LAWYER, CONDITIONS IN PORTUGAL TODAY MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PORTUGUESE RIGHTISTS TO ORGANIZE FOR ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN FROM WITHIN THE COUNTRY; THE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORT MUST BE MADE FROM WITHOUT. LAWYER FLATLY REFUSED TO GET INTO SPECIFICS, NAMING NAMES OR REVEALING FUTURE STRATEGIES. GIVEN HIS BACKGROUND, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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ASSERTION WAS BASED ON MORE THAN MERE HUNCH OR WISHFUL THINKING.

5. FOR MADRID: WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION YOU MAY BE ABLE TO ACQUIRE CONCERNING BACKGROUND TO NUEVO DIARIO STORY, AS WELL AS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF ITS POST-PUBLICATION EXPLANATION THAT STORY WAS MEANT TO BE PRESENTED AS A CURIOSITY, "SUCH AS THE

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE APPEARANCE OF A TORTOISE WEIGHING  
500 KILOS".  
SCOTT

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Authority:** shawdg  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**To:** STATE MADRID  
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